



4.

A profession,  
not an occupation only

About 90 % of museum staff may be considered as semiskilled for the job

If you really think a bio-technologist-nutricionist is automatically qualified to become a curator in the Food Museum,  
then, how about making him or her  
the chief cook in the your favourite restaurant?

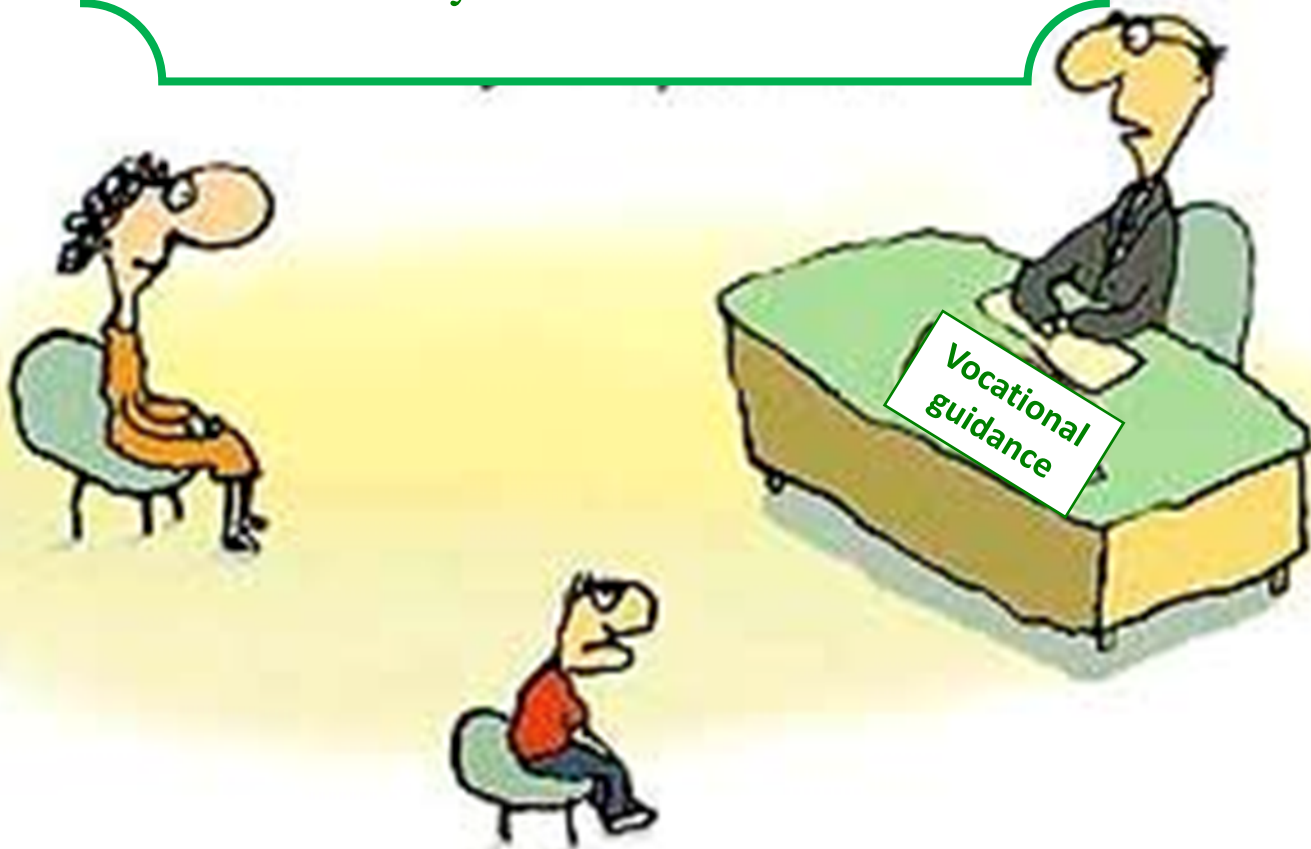
Trained cooks know all about kitchen, food, taste, catering,  
and all about customer's needs and wants

**Innovative answers  
may redefine collecting....**

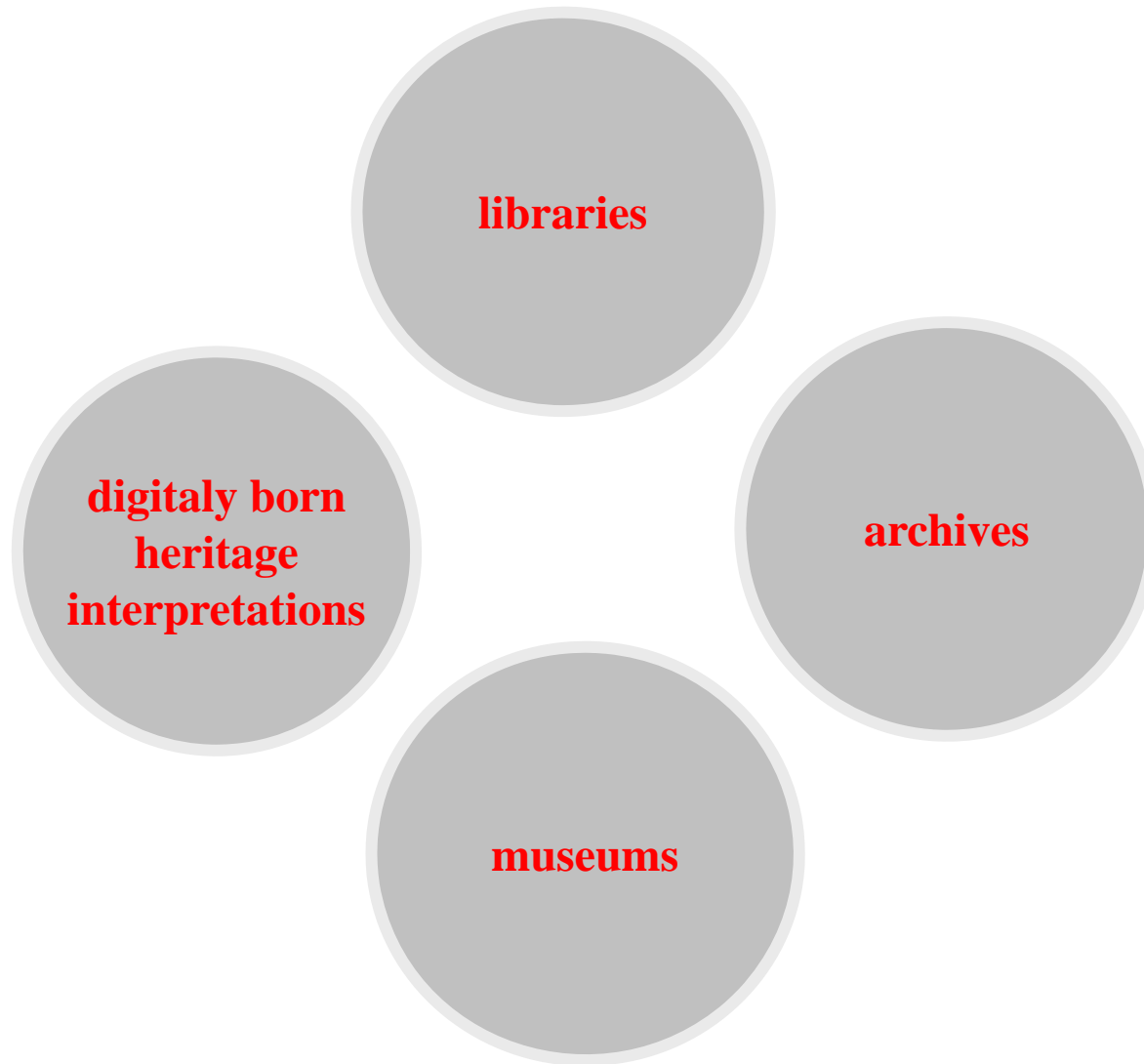
- Whose past we document and communicate?
- Whose interests are reflected in collections?
- Product or process? object or concept? ...
- Who is the owner?
- Who finances?
- Profession or occupations?
- Possesiveness or giving?
- PM system or selfish isolation?
- Mission or synecure?

**....from treasure to interpretive inventory ?**

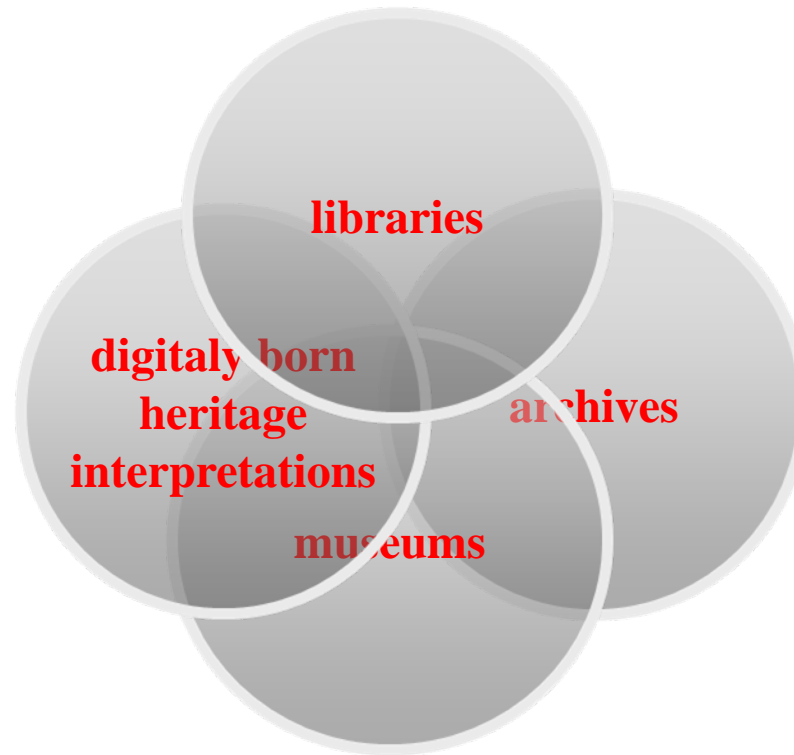
...Our test indicate that your little Robert is a slow, introvert and lethargic opportunist without empathy or vocational zest and we suggest that he pursue a career serving his community as a curator in a museum.



## **Public memory institutions - the usual state**

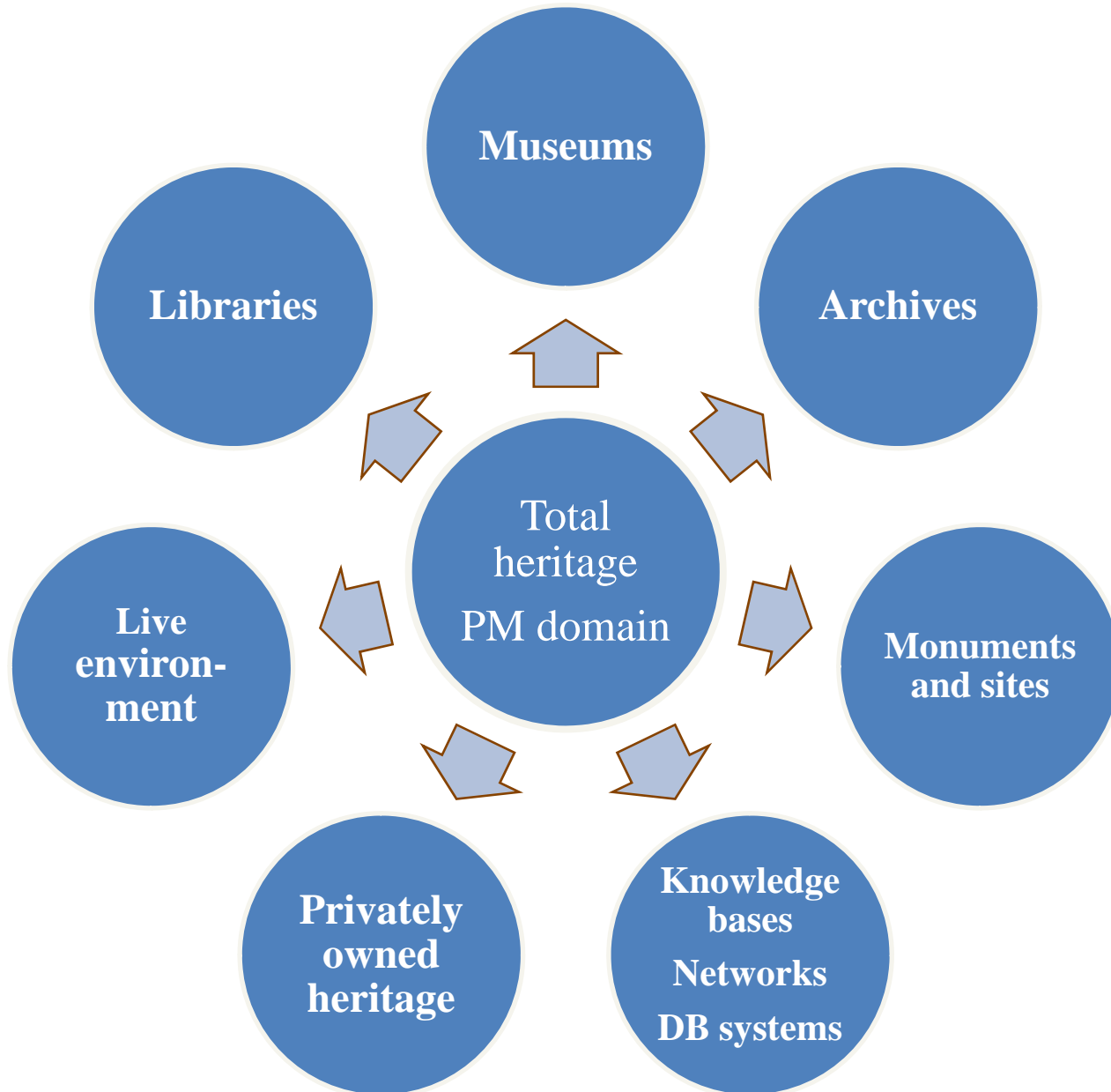


## **Convergence of public memory institutions**



**The logical development with the consequences**

# The lost whole of heritage or the public memory domain







Transfer of  
collective  
experience

Source,  
Need,  
Process

Wisdom,  
Improvement,  
PMI



Only a profession can fight for its mission



All professions are  
conspiracies against  
the laity.

The Doctor's Dilemma  
1906  
Act I  
Bernard Shaw




# Corruption



Alex Wong/Getty Images

Lawrence M. Small stepped down in the wake of criticisms of spending at the Smithsonian. Chauffered cars, private jets, top rated hotels....

Mr. Small's compensation, which totaled \$915,698 this year, and "hundreds of thousands" in reimbursements during his tenure for items like "chandelier cleaning and pool heaters" at Mr. Small's home.



\$1.8 million a year in salary and  
rent-free museum-owned  
apartment

**All occupations are struggling  
to become a profession**



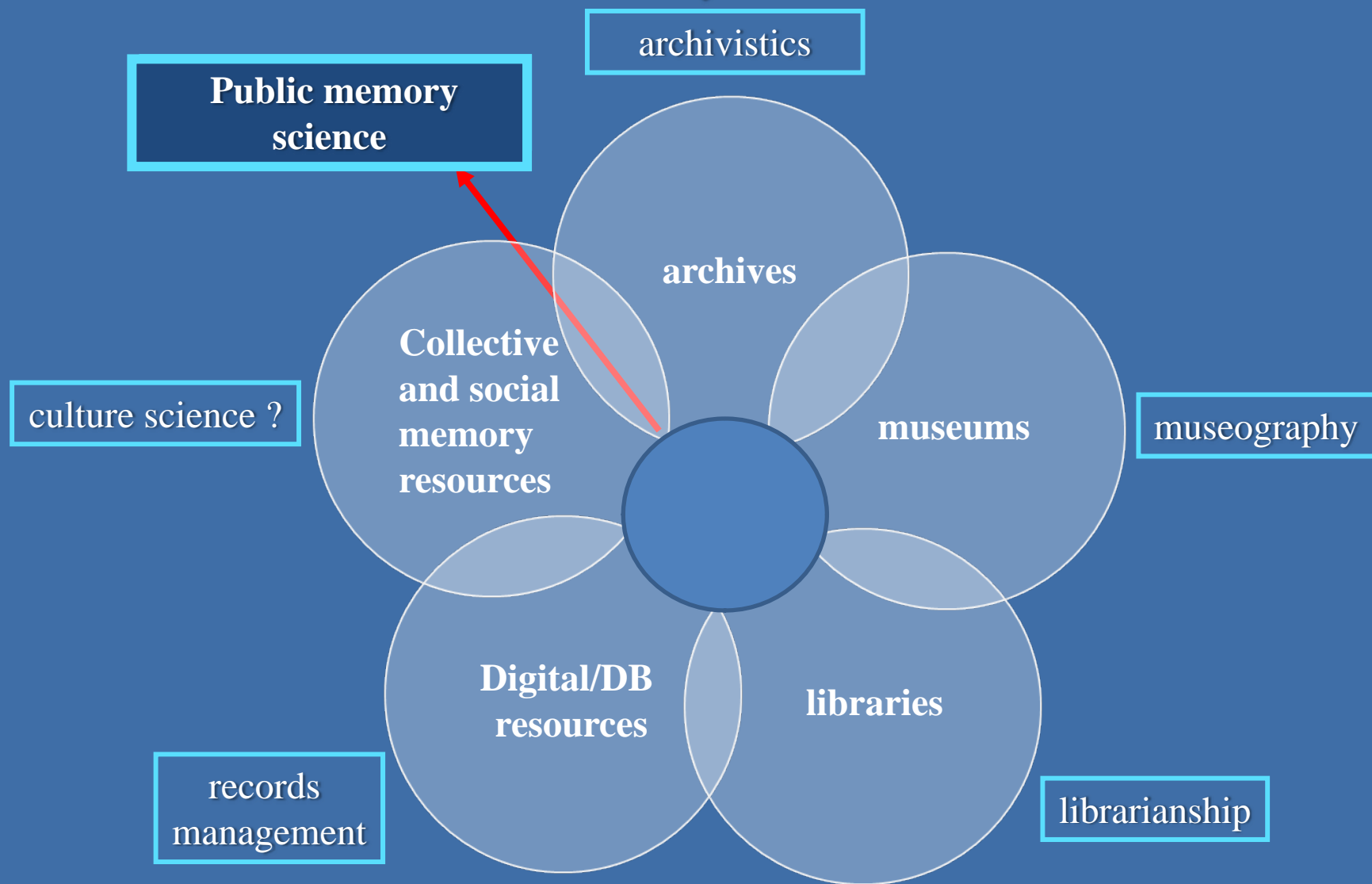
**All heritage occupations are struggling  
to become a profession  
when united,  
they may become a profession**

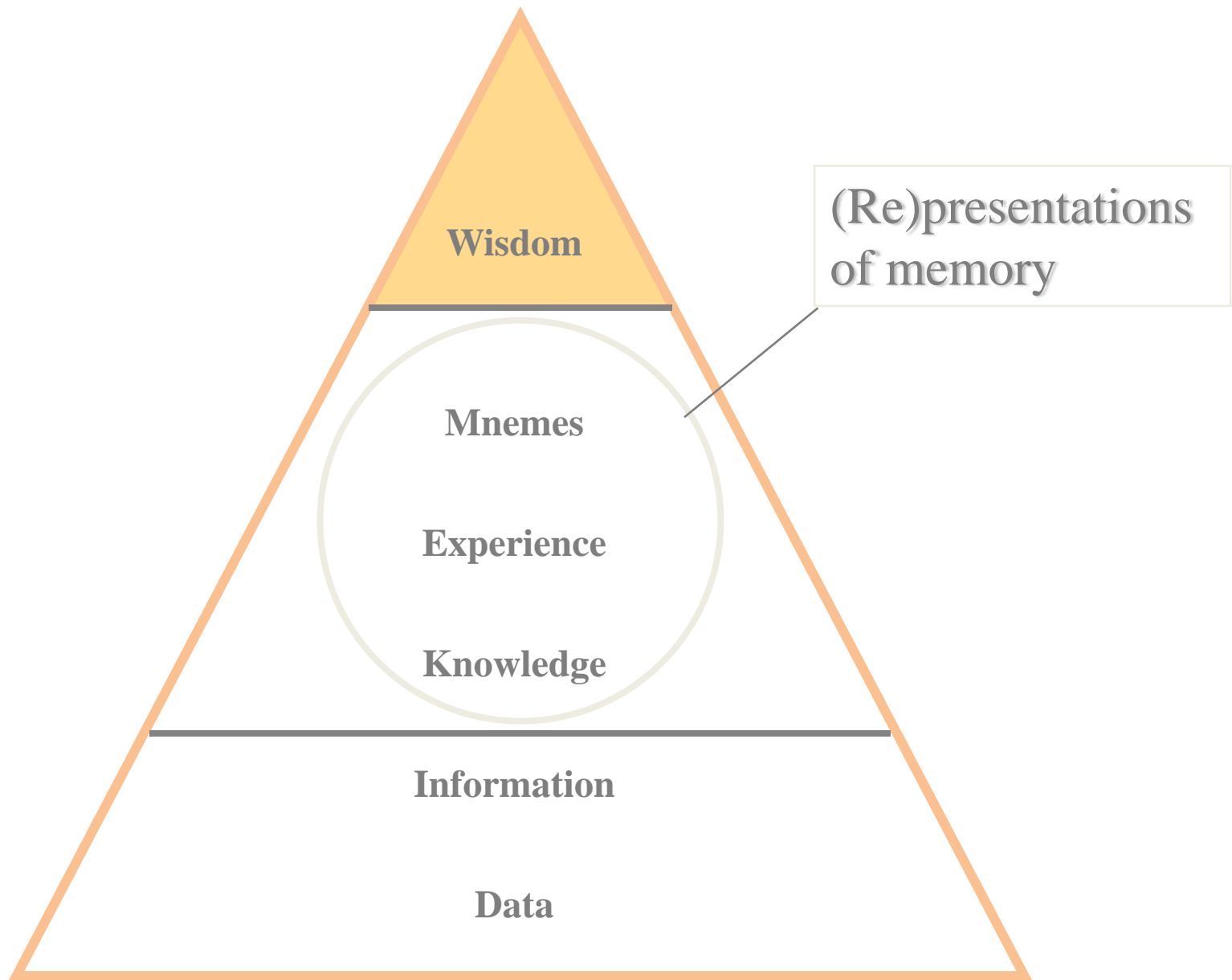


Lao Tzu was a curator of the royal library



# Public memory and its science





# WHAT PROFESSION ?

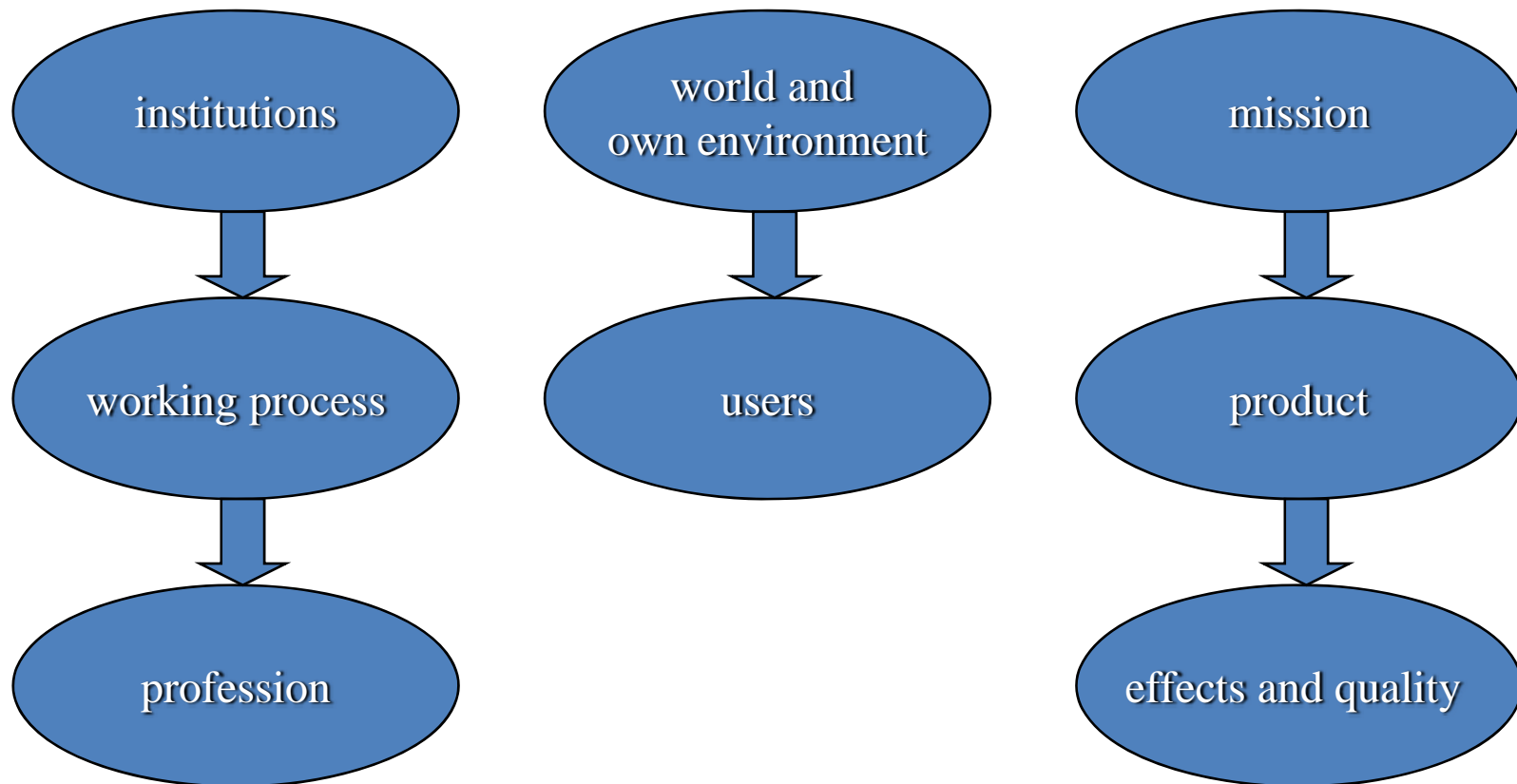
## SOME ELEMENTS

1. obligatory instruction in historical & scholarly principles of the profession and its skills and methods
2. legal regulations of status, social function and position
3. license system
4. ethical codex
5. standards of performance and achievement
6. specific professional culture
7. autonomy in action
8. specific methods of research and performance
9. set of working yet open and anticipatory definitions
10. idealist social objective

# Ways of improving

1. By buying devices (machines, equipment ). Technology.
2. By buying knowledge (methods, techniques). Training.
3. By changing mindset, the way of reasoning, *weltanschauung* - world-view, changing attitudes, by new understanding, a different sensitivity. Education.

For a good job in heritage institutions  
one needs understanding of:



**Innovative answers  
may redefine collecting....**

- Whose past we document and communicate?
- Whose interests are reflected in collections?
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**....from treasure to interpretive inventory ?**



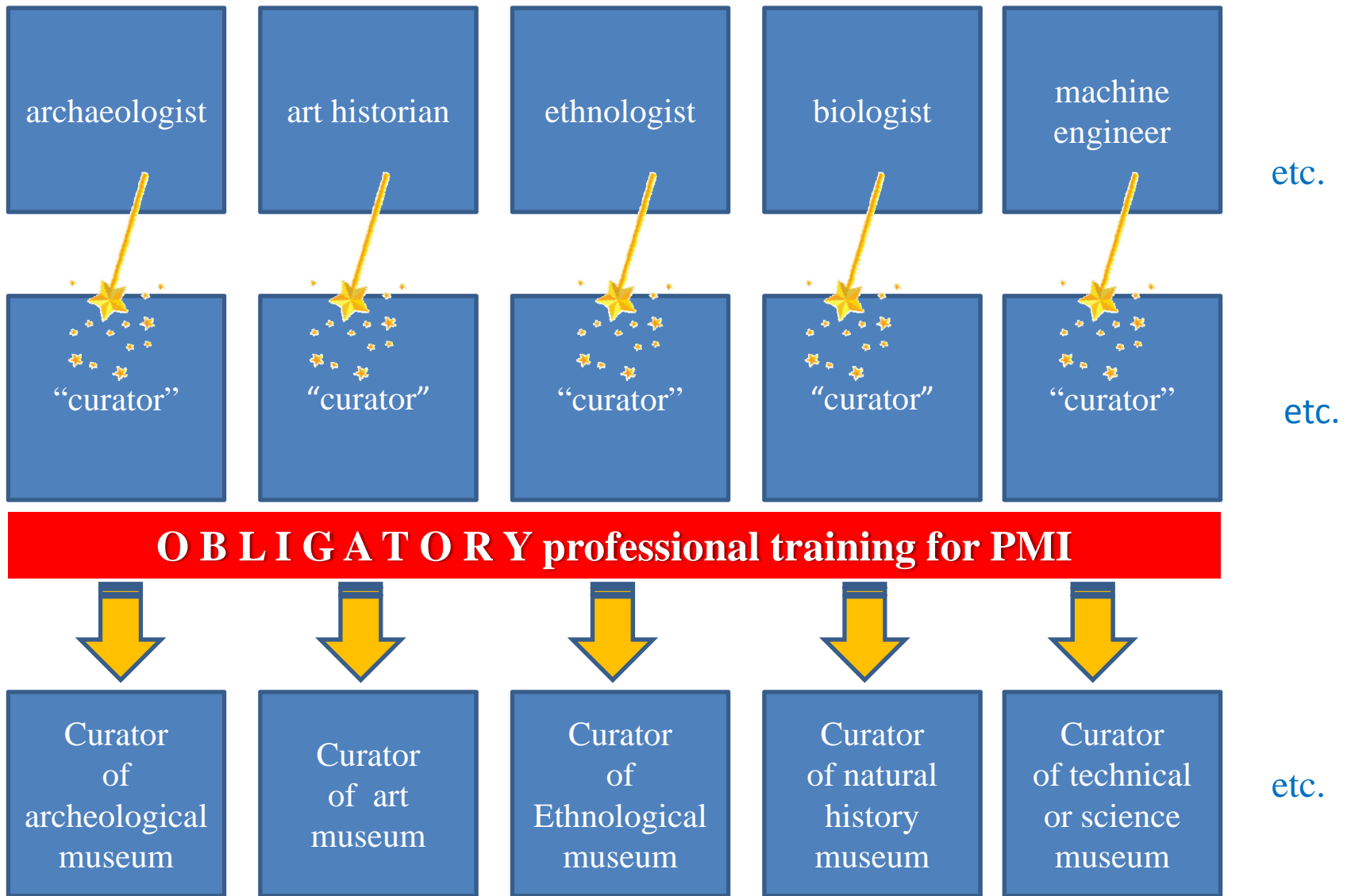
## Heritage managers as interpreters of facts and contexts

- Superior moral integrity
- Self-assurance based upon knowledge and being well informed
- Commitment for the superior, daring mission
- Determination by the direct action
- Idealist goal
- Capacity for the creative and effective communication
- Readiness to stand the public judgement of the job and justify the confidence

# The transfer of the professional experience

- Understanding the true nature of heritage institutions
- The way of developing of the professional intelligence (IQ)
- The understanding of profession and gaining the sense of measure
- Encouragement and inspiration of the professional creativity
- Development of professional language, style and taste

## Case study : a museum curator



academic discipline + occupational skills & mission → profession

## Case study : a museum curator

**NO OBLIGATORY professional training  
for PM profession**

archaeologist



“curator”  
or  
curator,  
semiskilled

academic discipline + learning by “sitting next to Sally”  **occupation**

## Training for the Public memory profession

**Basic academic discipline**

+

**Theory of the particular PM occupation**

+

**Praxis of the particular PM occupation**

+

**PM Science**

---

**= Professional status (PM sector)**

# **Training for the public memory profession**

## **Occupation: curator of an archaeological museum**

### **Archaeology**

- + Basic academic discipline
- + **Museology / Museography**
- + Theory of the particular PM occupation
- + **Internship in a museum**
- + Praxis of the particular PM occupation
- + **Science of PM**

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### **Science of PM**

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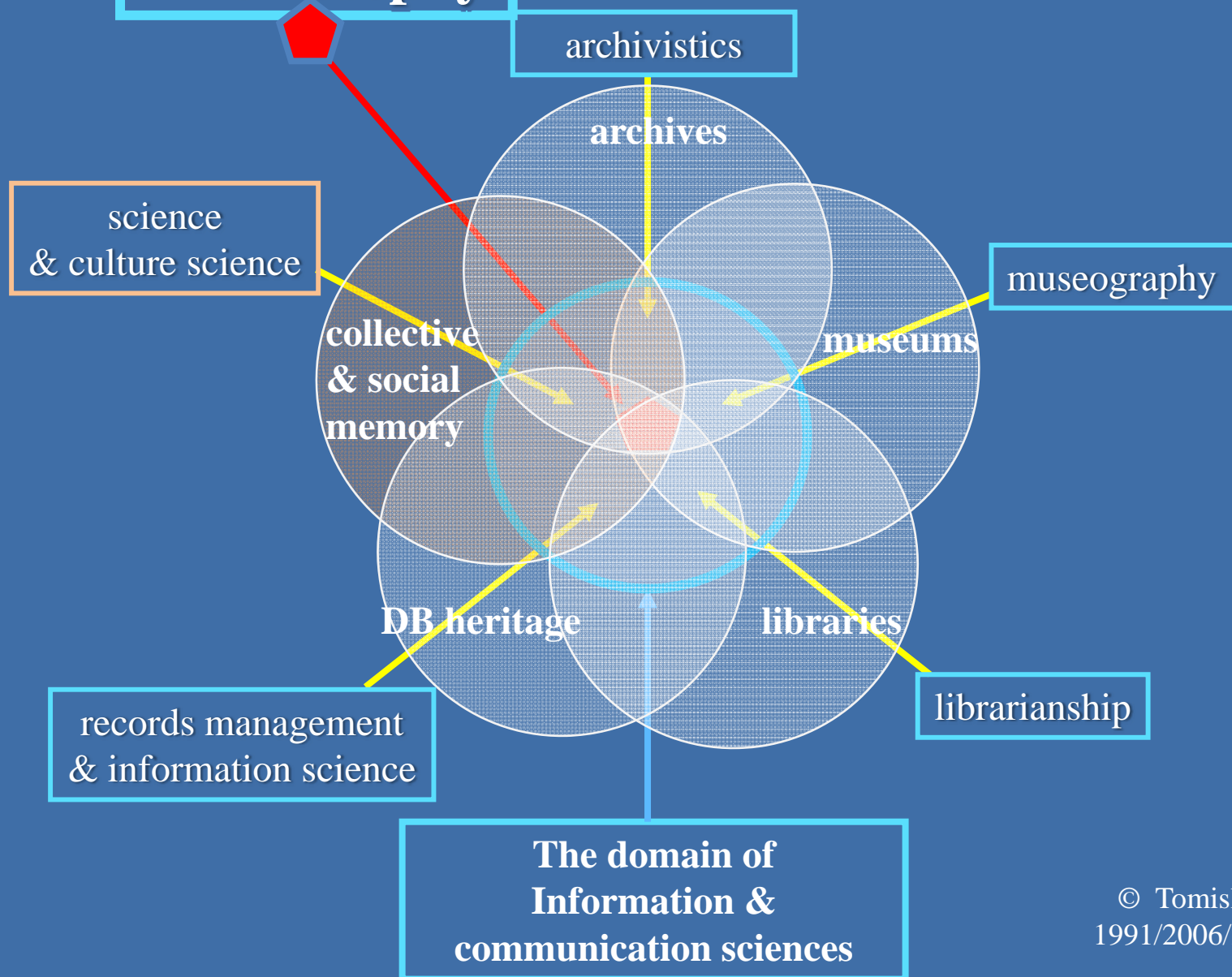
**= Curator**

= Status of PMI professional



# Public memory institutions and their science

## Mnemosophy



Unlike occupations, all professions are  
respected and prosperous:

own science

obligatory education

autonomy

ethics, mission, idealist goal



# Members of a profession:

- choose job by vocation
- get specific professional education
- have flexible working hours
- get retired optionally
- count in developmental strategies
- make far-reaching decisions
- are well paid

# To do our job well,

be it in a tiny museum or the huge institution,  
we have to master four areas of expertise and insight:

1. knowing well the nature of the world  
in which museums operate and our users live,
2. having a clear philosophy of the profession as a total understanding of  
the museum and heritage concepts
3. perfectly knowing our users
4. knowing well the set of techniques, methods and procedures known as the  
museum working process

©T.Šola 1989/99

**Only the fourth expertise can be learned on the job,  
although it is not advisable: too long and expensive.**

© Tomislav Šola 1990

## Heritage curators as interpreters of facts and contexts

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Who is a Museologist?

A Museologist is a Curator with  
the Mind of a Visitor.

© Tomislav Šola, University of Zagreb, 1990.



# who is heritologist or heritage curator ?

An academically trained person  
in charge of the public memory institution  
or part of its working process;

The term is generic  
and denotes general belonging to the profession  
in charge of public memory  
and applies to curatorial, archivistic, librarian  
and other kindred expertise from the public memory sector.

# **MNEMOSOPHIA**

**Mneme = Memory**

**Sophia = Wisdom**

**Science of Public Memory**

**selected, understood  
and used  
as social wisdom**

## **WISDOM**

**The responsible, morally based selection of knowledge, extracted from the immense sources of collective and social memory, adapted to the challenges of the present and future and serving the public needs, is a close definition of wisdom.**

**Tomislav Šola, 1987/2009.**

CREATIVITY  
the ability  
to restructure  
one's  
understanding  
of a situation  
in a non-  
obvious way.



# The creative curator

**Creativity is the privilege of the few, earned by hard work with a help of talent. They work with talent, zest, challenge, excitement, satisfaction, risk, responsibility and knowledge**

**The ordinary, average curator's creativity is called rut or tradition. They indulge security and calm fulfilment of inherited collective consent.**

# The amateurs are natural victims of most of the mistakes

**When amateurs trespass on the professional domain,  
they become mere dilentati:  
a rather dangerous and costly kind**

A general recommendation  
to the rising number of amateurs in heritage matters

**Just do not be creative,  
- please!**

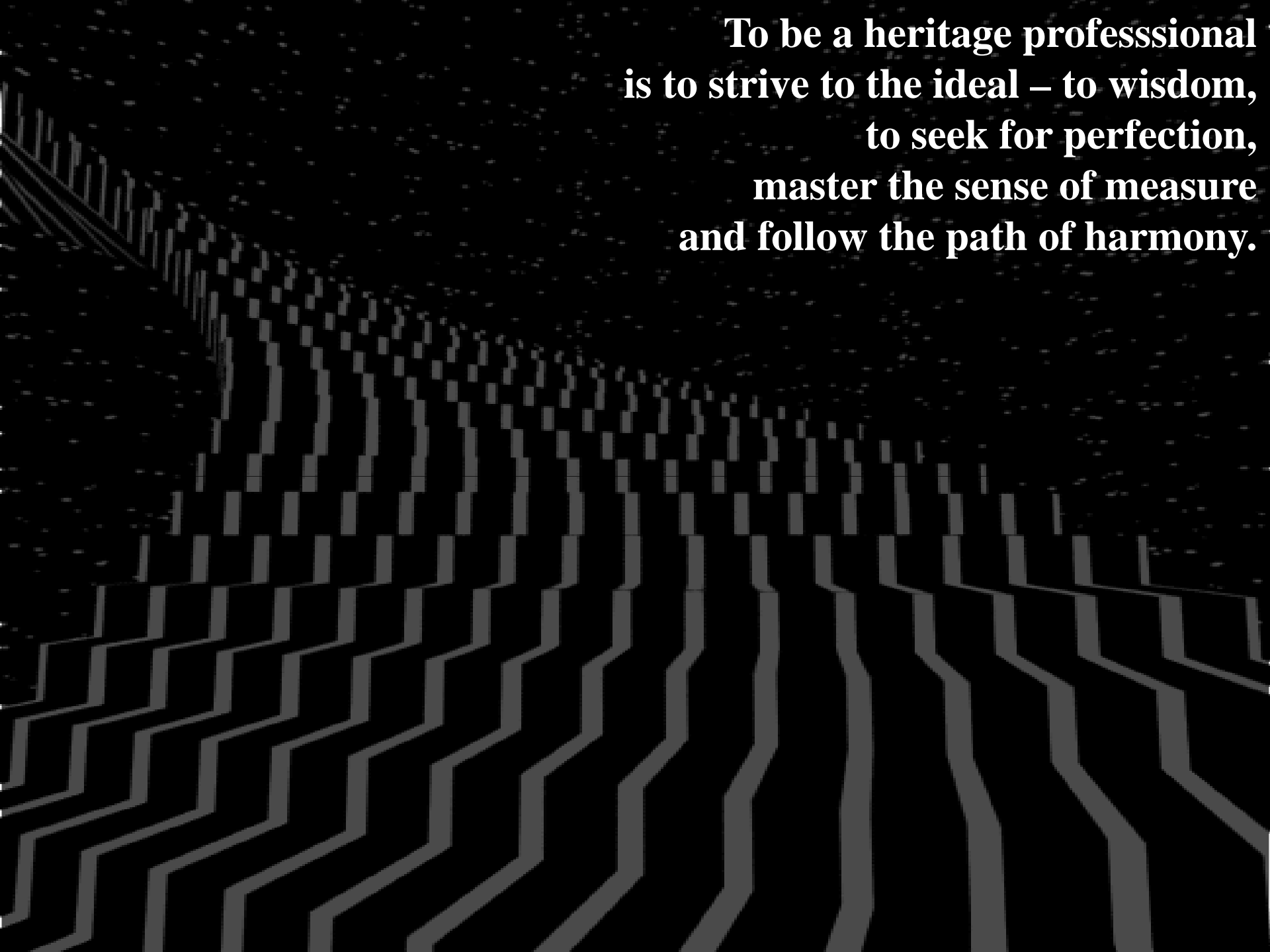
That is, either people do  
what their ancestors advise,  
or, - if they are silent,  
-it is the societal mission of professionals  
to assist them to understanding and  
appropriation of their heritage.

# Museologist, heritage specialist, consultant in planning, has many roles

- acting as a **catalyst and creative facilitator and interpreter** of ideas between the client (often politicians), the professional heritage staff involved, and the professional designers and architects.
- **ensuring that the aspirations** of the client have been met, and by satisfying the professionals involved that their hopes for the project have been presented effectively and in realistic terms to the professional designers etc.
- **guiding the planning process** of the whole scope of the project in a way that it is being kept within the budget
- **interviewing interested parties** for the design-team appointments
- **making presentations on the projects** to the decision-makers from the position of “neutral experienced professional” and presentation skills (often saving a project that would otherwise end in argument and disharmony).
- acting as the “**trusted professional intermediary**” – both the political client side, the professional design teams, and the lowly but all-important curators, having confidence in the professional reputation and wide experience of the consultant.
- offering **objective, truthful, unbiased and professionally authoritative advice** on any particular issue of all the various sides in a project, who are, perversely, often in competition against each other.
- **helping with “national Branding” exercises**, from the heritage point of view

Public memory institutions  
are not  
about preserving past.  
They are about  
change and continuity.



The background of the slide is a dark, textured surface. On the left side, there is a series of vertical lines that create a perspective effect, appearing to recede into the distance. The lines are of varying heights and are arranged in a way that suggests a grid or a series of steps. The overall effect is one of depth and movement.

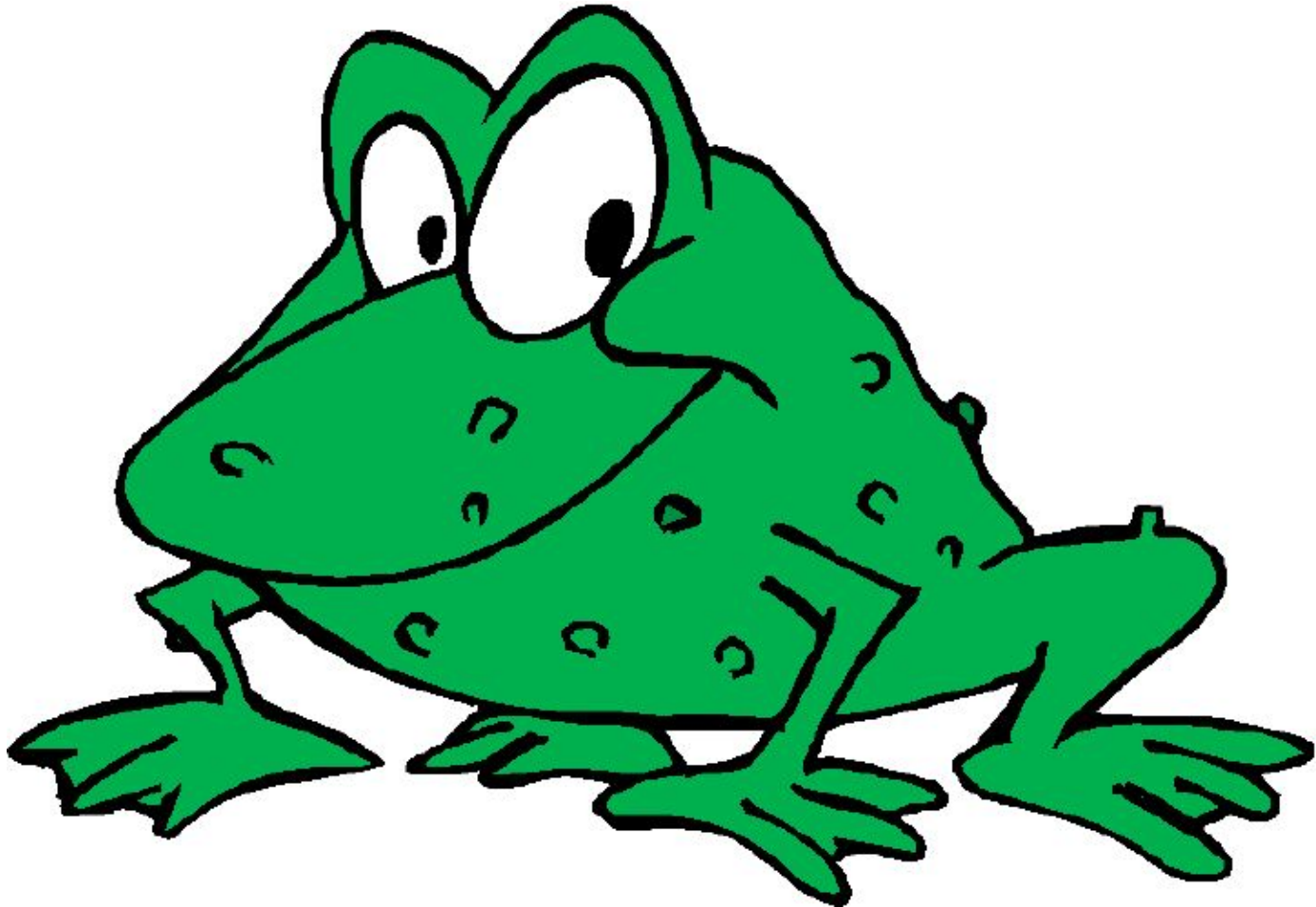
**To be a heritage professional  
is to strive to the ideal – to wisdom,  
to seek for perfection,  
master the sense of measure  
and follow the path of harmony.**

**What is the ideal of heritage /tourism sector(s)? When they do their job successfully, will your country be more what it really is, or less?**



**Can we be a relevant partner or counter-force if we are not a profession?**

**To be a brave,  
innovative, mission-driven curator,  
creates enemies and problems!**



**So, when in  
a trouble,**

**never, ever give up...!**

